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ABSTRACT

Project HAND-UP (Helping Adolescents Needing Direction-Unlimited Partnership) was a 2-year program to enhance dropout prevention services to at-risk youth by establishing a closer linkage between Job Training Partnership (JTPA)-Ohio and the Ohio Department of Education's Occupational Work Adjustment (OWA) programs. The project's major activities included the following: (1) six regional conferences at which more than 150 OWA instructors met with local JTPA representatives; (2) five regional grant-writing workshops for more than 80 instructors who developed or improved their skills in writing proposals for JTPA-supported linkages; and (3) 12 OWA programs successfully formed a new linkage with their local JTPA program; and (4) the awarding of minigrants to 4 OWA programs. Additional linkages and grants were made during the project's second year. (KC)

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PROJECT HAND-UP

HELPING ADOLESCENTS NEEDING DIRECTION
UNLIMITED PARTNERSHIP

FINAL REPORT

Prepared by
The Ohio Department of Education
Division of Vocational and Career Education
Columbus, Ohio

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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FOREWORD

The Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Career Education, supports approximately 550 Occupational Work Adjustment (OWA) programs in junior and senior high schools throughout the state. Close to 12,000 students, ages 14 or 15, who are experiencing difficulty succeeding in school, and thus are potential dropouts, are being served by the programs. Of those "at-risk" students who participate in OWA, 75 percent go on to graduate.

In support of a major effort to enhance and expand the effectiveness of dropout prevention services to "at-risk" youth, the Department of Education launched Project HAND-UP in 1987. The goal of the project was to strengthen and expand the linkage between OWA programs and local Job Training Partnership-Ohio programs. The Center on Education and Training for Employment assisted in the project by providing planning, coordination, and training services to OWA teachers throughout the state. The major activities conducted during the 1987-1988 school year included (1) six regional conferences at which more than 150 OWA instructors met with local JTPA representatives, (2) five regional grant-writing workshops for more than 80 instructors who developed or improved their skills in writing proposals for JTPA-supported linkages, and (3) the awarding of mini-grants to OWA programs that successfully formed a new linkage with their local JTPA program.

Project HAND-UP was continued through the 1988-1989 school year and resulted in an increase in the number of linkages formed, the award of additional mini-grants, and the preparation of a linkage guide.

During the period 1987 to 1989 more than 200 OWA instructors were involved in Project HAND-UP, resulting in the formation of more than 90 verified linkages with JTPA. Those linkages provided OWA programs with student services such as tutoring, remedial education materials, access to computer-based educational programs, transportation services, stipends, and summer employment experiences, plus many other forms of assistance.

The successful results of the project are due in part to the generous contribution of time, effort, and leadership by many people. We begin by recognizing and thanking Dr. Larry Casterline, Assistant Director, Business and Marketing Education for his oversight, advice, and participation in the project. Thanks is also extended to William Ashley, Senior Research Specialist, and Abigail Hurd, Secretary, for their efforts in assisting the Department of Education conduct HAND-UP activities.

We wish to thank the members of the State Education Coordination and Grants Advisory Council for supporting Project HAND-UP and to the Job Training Partnership Services staff, including Mr. Steve Shaw and Ms. Karen Jesko, supervisors, and Ms. Vicki L. Melvin, Assistant Director for their assistance and support during all phases of the project.

The Division of Vocational and Career Education also wishes to thank the many OWA instructors who participated in project meetings, surveys, and workshops, and who took the initiative in meeting and linking with the JTPA staff in their area.

In the final analysis, however, it is only through the hard work and dedication of OWA instructors and local JTPA staff members that progress was made in serving "at-risk" youths.

Jack L. Lenz
Consultant
The Division of Vocational and Career Education
The Ohio Department of Education

PROJECT HAND-UP FINAL REPORT

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Purpose and Goals

Project HAND-UP (Helping Adolescents Needing Direction - Unlimited Partnership) was started in 1987 by the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Career Education, Columbus, Ohio. The project was supported by a grant of federal funds of the Job Training Partnership Act 97-300, Section 123 with approval from the State Education Coordination and Grants Advisory Council.

The goals of the project were to enhance dropout prevention services to "at-risk" youth by establishing a closer linkage between JTPA-Ohio and the ODE/Division of Vocational and Career Education/Occupational Work Adjustment programs. Through a closer linkage, it was intended that designated JTPA funds would be efficiently and effectively utilized in support of collaborative state and local disadvantaged youth programs.

Outcomes

The anticipated outcomes identified for the project were the following:

- Occupational Work Adjustment instructors will increase their knowledge of and participation in JTPA activities. This increased knowledge and participation will aid in the education of the OWA (dropout prone) students.
- JTPA personnel will increase their knowledge of and participation in OWA activities. This increased knowledge and participation will enhance JTPA efforts in serving economically disadvantaged youth.
- Students receiving multiple services will increase their competence in math, communications, reading and employability skills, ultimately graduating from high school and becoming productive members of our economy.
- Referral system relationships between instructors and JTPA summer youth employment programs will be strengthened.
- OWA/JTPA "at-risk" teams will be formed for intervention purposes and in securing opportunities for full-range services.
- Through this project, OWA programs and JTPA will continue their linkage in subsequent years. Through this continued linkage, the partnerships formed will expand and grow to better serve those "at-risk" youth.

Activities

The general strategy proposed for the implementation of the project focused on three major types of activities.

A. Awareness and promotion activities were to include the development and distribution of informational brochures, fact sheets, multi-media materials and so forth. Such materials were to be distributed to OWA instructors and JTPA personnel in all SDA's.

B. Coordination and linkage activities were to include developing and conducting regional forums for OWA coordinators and JTPA personnel to facilitate linkages. Also, regional grant-writing workshops were to be conducted to help OWA instructors develop proposals for Title II-A linkages.

   Follow-up forums were also proposed to identify and strengthen newly established linkages. Through such forums model program linkages would be identified and replicated.

C. Remediation was to be enhanced through instructional materials in math, reading, writing, and communications for those OWA programs forming linkages.

D. The curriculum was to be supplemented in those programs forming linkages through curriculum materials to aid students in obtaining JTPA, Title II-A, youth competencies.

Evaluation

The project outcomes were to be evaluated through a follow-up study to determine (1) the number of students receiving multiple services, (2) the percentage of participants continuing their education, (3) the extent of increased involvement between instructors and JTPA summer programs, and (4) the number of "at-risk" teams and their success in obtaining full-range services.

Technical Assistance

The Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Career Education designated Mr. Jack Lenz as the principal manager for Project HAND-UP. Mr. Lenz subsequently contacted the National Center for Research in Vocational Education at The Ohio State University for assistance in coordinating and implementing the project. [The National Center is now the Center on Education and Training for Employment.]

The Center provided assistance in planning and coordinating activities and events and in conducting grant-writing workshops. Dr. William Ashley was responsible for providing assistance to the project.

Project HAND-UP was originally proposed as a one year effort, but was extended to a second year of activities with no additional funding requested from the sponsor.

The remainder of this report describes in one section, the activities and events that were carried out during the two years (1987-1989). Outcomes and benefits are reported in another section.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Year One (1987-1988)

The scope of work that was conducted during the first year of the project consisted of the four major activities.

A summary of each activity is presented with pertinent details highlighted where appropriate.

1.0 Convene an Advisory Panel

On July 15, 1987 the advisory panel held its first meeting to make plans for the sequencing of project tasks and events. Mr. Jack Lenz invited people who represented all organizations and groups important to the success of the project. The members of the panel were (in alphabetical order):

Dr. William Ashley, National Center for Research in Vocational Education

Dr. Larry Casterline, Assistant Director, Voc. Business and Marketing, Ohio Dept. of Education

Mr. Elmer Fundermark, Rowe Junior High School, OWA Instructor

Ms. Shirley Jacobs, Job Training Partnership - Ohio

Mr. Jack Lenz, Ohio Department of Education, OWA Supervisor

Mr. Rick Mangini, Ohio Department of Education, OWA Supervisor

Ms. Linda Mossholder, SDA #15, Central Ohio Rural Consortium

Ms. Nancy Reed, SDA #17, Circleville PIC

Mr. Steve Shaw, Ohio Department of Education, Job Training Partnership Services, Supervisor

Mr. Dennis Spriggs, Urbana High School, OWA Instructor

Mr. Dave Wolfe, The Ohio State University, OWA Teacher Educator

Prior to the first panel meeting, the initial thinking about the project activities had centered around a single statewide conference that would be held in Columbus. Technical assistance might be provided as a follow-up to requests from OWA programs around the state.

During the first panel meeting decisions and plans were made to (1) mail out project promotional information to OWA teachers, school administrators, SDA directors, PIC chairpersons and youth program coordinators, (2) conduct a survey of the interest of each group in participating in the project, (3) conduct six regional kick off conferences with educators and SDA representatives, (4) conduct grant-writing workshops for interested OWA instructors, and (5) conduct a mini-grant award competition among OWA programs forming linkages with JTPA.

The advisory panel met again on September 22, 1987 to review results of the interest survey and finalize plans and schedules for the project activities during the remainder of the year. Prior to the interest survey mailing, each OWA program (500+) and each SDA received a notebook of information about the project and each of the principal programs involved. The responses from the interest survey totaled 315 OWA programs and 14 SDA offices. Steve Shaw and Shirley Jacobs subsequently contacted additional SDA's to generate interest in the project.

A third meeting of the panel was held in the Spring of 1988 to review the accomplishments of the project and consider extending the project for an additional year. Present at the meeting were Jack Lenz, Shirley Jacobs, Steve Shaw, Karen Jesko, Rick Mangini, and Bill Ashley. Discussions focused on the events that had taken place and the potential need for the project staff to support further linkages during the next school year (1989-1990) by sharing additional information and examples of successful linkages. The panel recommended that the project director apply for an extension and prepare a plan for a second year of activities. An extension was applied for and granted.

2.0 Develop and Conduct Kick-Off Conferences.

A total of six regional conferences were planned, scheduled, promoted and conducted during the months of November and December. The half-day lunch meetings gave OWA instructors and their respective school administrators the opportunity to meet with the staff from their local JTPA administrative offices. The meetings were held at centrally located hotel facilities in or near the cities of Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Akron/Canton, Toledo, and Chillicothe, Ohio. The meeting format was the same at each location and included the following activities:

Registration
Introductions
Project HAND-UP Overview
OWA/JTPA Overview
Questions and Answers
Lunch
Small group meeting with SDA personnel
Conclusion

The total number of participants at all of the meetings included 187 OWA instructors and school administrators, 40 SDA personnel and 6 regional JTPA state staff. All six meetings were successful in establishing communication links between school personnel and SDA personnel.

In general, OWA instructors received an orientation to the local JTPA programs, while SDA personnel learned about the form and function of the OWA program. A better understanding and appreciation of each program by the participants was one of the key outcomes.

3.0 Develop and Conduct Regional Grant Writing Workshops

The next phase of the project involved planning the grant writing workshops and promoting interest among OWA instructors in attending the session in their region.

The workshop sessions were scheduled for a full day at five sites around the state including Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Canton, and Toledo. The workshop program included discussions and activities to help OWA instructors better understand the purpose, structure, and administrative procedures involved in the JTPA programs in the state.

Instruction and practice exercises were included to help the participants learn how to structure a proposal and submit it for review to a local SDA administrative office. A notebook of take-home materials and examples was presented to each participant. A representative from either OBES/JTPA or JTP-Services was present at each workshop to answer questions and assist the workshop coordinator with discussions and practice exercises. A total of 81 OWA instructors participated in the workshops.

4.0 Conduct Follow-Up Activities with OWA Coordinators

Two types of follow-up activities were conducted during the winter and spring of 1988 with OWA instructors.

A survey of the linkage activities accomplished by OWA instructors was conducted across all 500 programs and the first round of mini-grant applications was conducted.

The linkage surveys were mailed in April 1988 and were returned and tallied by May 6, 1988. The number of instructors reporting the formation of a linkage was too small to provide an accurate profile of the projects impact as of May 1988. Many SDA's had already committed much if not all of their funds for the program year and thus had limited funds that could be allocated to OWA student services. Also, many SDA's were not funding program services for 14- and 15-year-old youth. Additionally, many OWA instructors were still involved in discussions with their local SDA offices and had not prepared a proposal or requested assistance by the time the linkage surveys were mailed.

The results of the 38 OWA linkage surveys that were returned indicated that 37 of the respondents had participated in one or more project activities to date and that 12 instructors had formed a new linkage. Six instructors had each submitted a proposal to their local SDA for funds.

In order to allow more time for OWA instructors to establish new linkages and to allow project HAND-UP staff to provide additional assistance, the project was extended for an additional year at no additional cost to the sponsor.

The mini-grant applications that were submitted were reviewed and awards were made to four programs. For more detail on the mini-grant award process see page 11 of this report.

Year Two (1988-1989)

The number of OWA programs that successfully established a linkage with a local SDA increased during the summer and fall of 1988. The project's efforts during 1987 began to pay dividends as OWA instructors followed up on their initial contacts and continued to work cooperatively with personnel in the local SDA offices to define relationships and formulate strategies to enhance their mutual program goals of serving at-risk youth.

A new plan of activities was developed to meet the changing needs of OWA instructors. The Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Career Education applied for and received an extension of Project HAND-UP through June 30, 1990. The scope of work proposed for the extended time frame focused on accomplishing two major objectives.

The objectives for the second year of the project were to:

- o provide OWA instructors with additional resource materials to aid them in forming linkages with JTPA, and
- o provide technical assistance to selected schools and OWA program instructors who requested help in establishing linkages with JTPA.

Several major tasks were planned and completed to achieve the intended objectives.

1.0 Prepare Descriptions of OWA-JTPA Linkages

The National Center provided technical assistance to the project by surveying and compiling information about new and existing linkages between OWA programs and JTPA. An analysis of the various linkages indicated that there were several types including one or more of the following services:

- o Student referred into JTPA Programs (In-School and out-of-school)
- o JTPA staff provide services to OWA students
- o JTPA programs provide materials and supplies
- o Funds provided directly to OWA program

A number of specific examples were investigated to obtain additional detailed information about the approach used to establish a relationship and the nature of the services and benefits derived from the relationship. Representatives from exemplary programs were recruited to assist in the task of helping other instructors complete a linkage during the year.

2.0 Provide Technical Assistance to OWA Instructors

Arrangements for five half-day sessions were made and OWA instructors who had formed linkages were invited to provide advice and assistance to other OWA instructors who desired help forming a linkage. The half-day programs provided an opportunity for participants to learn first hand about successful OWA-JTPA linkages that had been established in local area schools. Representatives for programs that had formed linkages described their ideas, strategies, and procedures for establishing their linkage and answered questions from the other participants. Special follow-up information was distributed in a notebook of references and guidelines.

The meetings were held at the following listed school locations.

1. Choffin Career Center, Feb. 13, 1989
2. Delaware Joint Vocational School, Feb. 14, 1989
3. Cuyahoga Joint Vocational School, Feb. 15, 1989
4. D. Russell Lee Joint Vocational School, Feb. 21, 1989
5. Muskingum Joint Vocational School, Feb. 22, 1989

A total of 31 OWA instructors participated in the meetings and 5 other OWA instructors served as presenters.

3.0 Prepare and Distribute a Linkage Implementation Guide

A guide book was planned and developed by the Center and was distributed to all 550 OWA instructors and to SDA staff throughout the state by the Division of Vocational and Career Education.

Information in the Linkage Implementation Guide was based on the first-hand experiences of school administrators, OWA instructors, and JTPA personnel at several selected sites including programs in large city, medium sized suburban, and rural school systems. An overview of the (1) OWA program goals and activities and, (2) JTPA program goals and services, and procedures for establishing linkages between the two organizations are fully detailed in the Guide. A collection of "linkage samplers" detailing the activities, services, and special features of 16 selected program linkages were presented.

The Guide also contained detailed instructions for preparing a proposal with examples of proposals that had been funded.

4.0 Award Mini-Grants

During 1987-1989 four rounds of applications for mini-grants were solicited from OWA instructors who had established linkages. Application forms were developed, printed, and mailed out to all OWA programs and returns were collected, compiled and reviewed. A committee of reviewers examined applicants in each round and systematically scored, ranked, and approved mini-grant awards. The committee members included a representative from the Division of Vocational and Career Education, JTP-Services, the Center, and an OWA Teacher Educator at OSU.

The schools that received mini-grants include the following:

Round One

Mechanicsburg
Talawanda
Hillsboro
Rootstown

Round Two

Hillsboro City Schools
Genoa Junior High School
Cleveland Schools
Mechanicsburg High School
Lakewood High School
Hartville
Bellaire High School
West Clermont
Ravenna
Bucyrus High School
Port Clinton
Marion Harding
Cardington
Barnesville High School
Greenville City Schools

Round Three

Rootstown
Warren
Ravenna
Upper Scioto Valley
Greenville
Port Clinton
Cardington
Butler County JVS

Round Four

Trimble Local
Defiance City Jr. & Sr. High
Sheffield - Sheffield Lake City School
St. Marys City
Miami Trace Local
Coventry Local
Amherst Exempted Village
South H.S. & Eastlake H.S.
Indian Lake Local
Columbus City - Mifflin H.S.
Sandy Valley Local
Minford Local
Green Local
Salem City
Willoughbly Eastlake

III. PROJECT OUTCOMES

Project HAND-UP was conducted to enhance the linkage between OWA programs and JTPA. A variety of services and products were provided to OWA programs throughout the state to achieve increased numbers of linkages. The full array of activities and the number of persons who benefited from each activitiy is presented in Table I.

TABLE I

Project Activities and Participants

Activities	Participants
Promotional Packages Distributed	550
Regional Get Acquainted Conferences	185
Grant Writing Workshops	81
Interest Survey of OWA Programs	350
Linkage Survey of OWA Programs	225
Mini-Grant Applications Submitted	70
Mini-Grants Awarded	44
Linkage Guides Distributed	550
Technical Assistance Meetings	31
State Conference Presentations	400

Several follow-up surveys were conducted to measure the relative impact of the project on the increase in the number of linkages formed between OWA programs and JTPA. The data obtained from the surveys and telephone calls were analyzed. The results are reported in Table II.

TABLE II

Benefits of Established Linkages

Linkage Benefit	Number of Recipients
OWA instructors informed about JTPA programs	500
OWA-JTPA program linkage formed	90
Value of services funds received	$6000 average/program
At-Risk teams formed	90 approximate
Students benefiting from linkages	3100
Students continuing in school	2800 approximate
OWA Instructors involved in JTPA summer program	35

A follow-up survey of a sample of the programs that formed a direct linkage with JTPA indicated that the types of benefits received varied over the two year period in question. Approximate averages are indicated in Table III.

TABLE III

JTPA Linkage Benefits By Type and Percent of Programs

Type of Benefit	Percentage of Programs
Funds received	33%
Materials received	40%
Services received	25%
Student job placement	44%
Student stipends	19%
Instructor summer employment	6%

The total impact of the project over time can only be estimated on the basis of the data sample obtained through follow-up surveys and questionnaires. In terms of verified linkages that were established and that resulted in a direct benefit to OWA students, Project HAND-UP achieved a high degree of success. Linkages formed during the two years of the project totaled over 90 with the dollar value of all linkages estimated at a total of $540,000 in services, materials, summer wages, stipends, and direct grants to OWA programs. The greater payoff from the project will accrue as previous linkages are expanded and new ones are formed over time.